

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed July 14, 2004 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 1-14, 16, 18, 23, 24, 26, and 28 are canceled. Claims 15, 21, 22, and 25 have been amended. Claims 15, 17, 19-22, 25, and 29 are pending in this application, with claims 15, 21, 22, and 25 being the only independent claims. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as herein amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action mailed July 14, 2004, the specification is objected to because the Abstract of the Disclosure does not commence on a separate sheet. A new Abstract corresponding to the Abstract submitted in the Preliminary Amendment is submitted herewith on a separate sheet. Accordingly, the objection to the specification should now be withdrawn.

Claim 18 is objected to as containing a minor informality. The limitations of claim 18 are now incorporated in independent claim 15. The phrase objected to by the Examiner is amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion. In view of the amendments, the objection to claim 18 should be withdrawn.

Claims 21-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,396,539 (Slekys).

Claims 15-17 and 25-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Slekys in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,663,762 (Joel).

Claims 19 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Slekys and Joel in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,718,108 (Davidson).

Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Slekys in view of Joel and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,901,359 (Malmstrom).

Claims 18, 23, 24, and 28 were found to contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In view of the allowable subject matter, the limitations of claim 18 and intervening claim 16 are incorporated in independent claim 15, the limitations of claims 23 and 24 are incorporated in independent claims 22 and 21, respectively, and the limitations of claim 28 and intervening claim 26 are incorporated in independent claim 25. In view of the incorporation of allowable subject matter, independent claims 15, 21, 22, and 25 should now be allowed.

Dependent claims 17, 19-20, 27, and 29, each being dependent on one of independent claims 15 and 25, are deemed allowable for the same reasons expressed above with respect to independent claims 15 and 25.

The application is now deemed to be in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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